

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-86 (Canceled)

87. (New) A method of dynamically configuring and optimizing a multimedia conference session, said method comprising:

providing a plurality of services to be used in a multimedia conference session, wherein each of the plurality of services is hosted by and independently executable through at least one service endpoint in a communications network;

enabling a plurality of users to participate in the multimedia conference session, wherein each user can participate in the conference session through at least one respective user endpoint in the communications network;

receiving a request to initiate the multimedia conference session;

in response to the session initiation request, establishing the multimedia conference session via the steps of:

(a) identifying respective user endpoints for each of the plurality of users participating in the session;

(b) identifying a subset of services selected from the plurality of the services for the conference session and respective service endpoints associated with each of the subset of services in the communications network; and

(c) defining a message routing mesh comprising all of the user endpoints and service endpoints identified in (a) and (b);

routing messages between any of the user and service endpoints in the message routing mesh during real-time performance of the conference session;

updating the multimedia conference session with a newly selected service from the plurality of the services; and

in response to the newly selected service, identifying a particular service endpoint associated with the newly selected service and including the particular service endpoint into the message routing mesh.

88. (New) The method of Claim 87, wherein the plurality of services comprise an audio service, a video service, a presence service, an authentication service and a graphic service.

89. (New) The method of Claim 87, wherein the step of establishing the conference session further comprises:

creating a temporary conference endpoint corresponding to the conference session; and including the temporary conference endpoint into the message routing mesh.

90. (New) The method of Claim 87, wherein the step of routing messages between any of the user and service endpoints in the message routing mesh further comprises routing messages from a source endpoint to a destination endpoint directly in the communications network.

91. (New) The method of Claim 87, wherein the step of routing messages between any of the user and service endpoints in the message routing mesh further comprises routing messages from a source endpoint to a destination endpoint via an intermediate service endpoint in the communications network.

92. (New) The method of Claim '87, further comprising creating an additional user or service endpoint by installing and executing a software program on a computing platform connected to the communications network.

93. (New) The method of Claim 92, wherein the additional user endpoint or service endpoint is immediately available for communication with any existing endpoints in the conference session.

94. (New) The method of Claim 87, wherein a particular service is available simultaneously via more than one service endpoint so that identifying a service endpoint associated with said particular service further comprises determining a most suitable service endpoint from all service endpoints associated with said particular service pursuant to pre-defined protocols.

95. (New) A collaborative communication system configured to conduct multiple multimedia conference sessions simultaneously, wherein each conference session is dynamically configurable, said system comprising:

a plurality of endpoints in a communications network, said plurality of endpoints comprising at least a first group of endpoints involved in a first multimedia conference session and a second group of endpoints involved in a second multimedia conference session; and

a plurality of services, wherein each service is provided by at least one of a plurality of service endpoints distributed over the communications network,

wherein,

the first multimedia conference session is initiated from a first endpoint in the first group of endpoints, the first group of endpoints establishing a first message routing mesh so as to render the first conference session dynamically configurable,

the second multimedia conference session is initiated from a second endpoint in the second group of endpoints, the second group of endpoints establishing a second message routing mesh so as to render the second conference session dynamically configurable,

the first and second multimedia conference sessions are conducted simultaneously, and

the first and second message routing meshes may contain endpoints in common.

96. (New) The system of Claim 95, wherein at least one of the plurality of services is a media service providing at least one of an audio feature, a video feature or a graphic feature.

97. (New) The system of Claim 95, wherein at least one of the plurality of services is a control service providing at least one of a presence feature, an authentication feature, or an endpoint locator feature.

98. (New) A collaborative communication system configured to conduct multiple multimedia conference sessions simultaneously, wherein the system is dynamically configurable and expandable, said system comprising:

a plurality of endpoints in a communications network; and

a plurality of services for conducting a multimedia conference session, wherein each service is provided by at least one of a plurality of service endpoints distributed over the communications network,

wherein, each of the multiple multimedia conference sessions can be configured dynamically by adding or deleting any one of the plurality of endpoints in a message routing mesh associated with the conference session, and

wherein, the collaborative communication system can be expanded by adding additional services and associated endpoints into the plurality of endpoints.

99. (New) The system of Claim 98, wherein each additional service and associated endpoint can be added during any of the conference sessions without modification to any existing services or endpoints in the communications network.

100. (New) The system of Claim 98, wherein each additional service and associated endpoint is added by installing and executing a software application on the endpoint, said software application relating to the service and accessible from a computing platform connected to the communications network.

101. (New) The system of Claim 98, wherein at least one service and associated endpoint is capable of providing customized service instances pursuant to one or more specific subscriptions by users participating in each multimedia conference session.

102. (New) The system of Claim 101, wherein the customized service instances comprise at least one service instance reflecting a pre-subscribed security degree.

103. (New) The system of Claim 101, wherein the customized service instances comprise at least one service instance reflecting a pre-subscribed audio quality.

104. (New) The system of Claim 101, wherein the customized service instances comprise at least one service instance reflecting a pre-subscribed video quality.